

Come to SW Neighborhood Assembly Meeting Monday, Sept. 27, 1999 at King-Greenleaf Recreation Center



# The Southwester

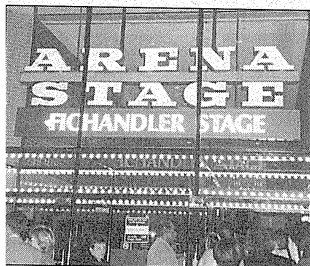
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October 1999

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## Arena and the Community

by Davelene Renshaw

Now that Arena Stage has agreed to stay in Southwest and we have had our moments of celebration, it is time to resume our efforts to work with Arena to help them overcome some of their problems with the community.

These are problems of crime, inadequate parking and rehearsal space, expansion of their facility (to include a new venue for productions, more administrative/office space and adequate shop space to build sets, etc.), improvement of the lackluster waterfront and, possibly the most important of all, lack of communication with the Southwest community.

Overcoming these problems will require

*continued on page 2*

## Southwest Task Force is Getting Things Done for Residents

By Jack Evans, Member, D.C. Council (Ward 2)

A big and enthusiastic turnout at the August 19 meeting of the Evans Southwest Task Force learned that Arena Stage is remaining in Southwest, that city agencies are cleaning up trash in parks and in vacant lots, and pedestrians will soon have safer access to Metro at Waterside Mall.

These actions are all important to the citizens of Southwest, which some city agencies seem to have considered the forgotten quadrant of the District. I formed the Task Force to bring pressing matters to the attention of city agencies, and then work with those agencies—or push them hard—to get their job done.

The Task Force is a perfect example of the citizens telling government what to do, instead of the other way around. I have been working particularly hard on two matters: keeping Arena Stage in Southwest and converting Randall School into the Millennium Arts Center. We've succeeded with Arena Stage and are making progress on the Arts Center, as reported on page 6.

Our key speaker at the August 19 meet-

*continued on page 3*

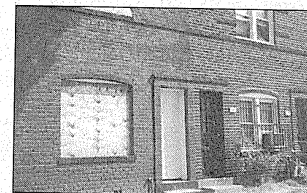


(Above) Dick Westbrook and June Hirsh; (Right) Boarded-up building

## Visit by Ward 2 Councilmember's Staff

by Herb Holmes, District 4 Representative

Recently, June Hirsh from Councilmember Evan's office and some other members of his staff visited the District 4 Section of SW. Representatives from the D.C. Department of Public Works accompanied them. The visit included sites such as the Southwest Community House, some public housing units, and some areas with vacant buildings which have been abandoned by their owners. It was an opportunity for the citizenry to express their concerns to Councilman Evans. ■



The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Meeting (SWNA) will be held on Monday, September 27, 1999, 7:30 p.m., at the King-Greenleaf Recreation Center, 201 N St. SW. According to SWNA President, there will be three speakers.

## Weiss Suggests Lawsuit Against EPA

Southwest residents should seek an injunction to stop EPA from abandoning its West Tower office building, Dr. Marc Weiss, wrote in an Op-Ed piece to *The Southwester*.

Weiss argues that the Federal Government should protect Southwest from the economic effects of EPA's "base closure." He also argues that letting EPA occupy most of the D.C. city hall – the Wilson Building – is "outrageous", and an insult to D.C.'s Home Rule.

For lack of space, *The Southwester* was unable to print the article, but gave it directly to the Board of Directors of SWNA, Inc., for action. ■

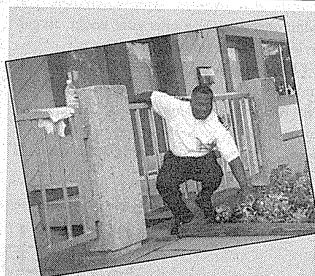
## Major Renovation Underway at L'Enfant Plaza

by Susan Fischer

L'Enfant Plaza, designed by I.M. Pei in the 1960's and envisioned as a critical element of the Southwest Urban Renewal Plan, will greet the new millennium style. The centerpiece of its new look will be a spectacular forty by forty foot skylight currently being constructed on the above-ground plaza in front of Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel. On ground level the skylight will be the focal point of an expansive patio area with benches and tables and a lawn for picnics and concerts, while below ground it will constitute a new and airy roof for the shopping concourse known as La Promenade.

In effect, it will bring the outside in to shoppers in the underground mall and bring inside out to plaza visitors, who will be able to see into the concourse from above. Even his fondness for glass walls, it is probably safe to assume that I. M. Pei would also approve of glass ceilings (in the literal sense, it is!).

*continued on page 8*



## Waterfront Beautification

by Eric Slaughter

First Mate Robert Collins of the dinner ship Odyssey III tends his mini-garden adjacent to the Odyssey Pier. Robert undertook the beautification project on his own. He planned, prepared and planted the coleus/pansy plots on his off-duty time. Robert hopes that others will follow his lead and he plans to plant other plots, which are presently barren along the seawall. He suggests that an "adopt a plot" program would help to motivate others. For more information, call (202) 488-6030. ■

## Welcome to Waterfront Station

The opening of two new stations on the Metro Green Line unites two halves of the Green Line into one. The new stations - Georgia Ave. - Petworth at Georgia Ave and Hampshire Ave NW and Columbia Heights at 14th and Irving St, NW - are Metro's 77th and 78th rail stations.

Metro patrons all the way from Greenbelt, MD, can now reach Southwest's Waterfront area in 20 minutes. Other stations with through service to Waterfront for the first time include College Park/U of Md, Prince George's Plaza, West Hyattsville, and Fort Totten. ■

**The Waterside Mall Task Force** will meet in the SWNA office Wednesday, October 6 at 7:00 pm to elect new Co-Chairs and nominations will be accepted from the floor. Nominees will provide a brief qualifications statement and their vision for the future of the WMTF. ■



Pylon in station

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## A Park in Search of a Name

by Margaret Feldman

A Southwest resident suggested that we need to name the park at the corner of I Street and 6th Street. He checked with the Park Service and found it really has not been named. He suggested the name of a well-known jazz musician who used to live in SW. Perhaps others have specific names to suggest, or other ideas. How about sending suggestions to the *Southwester*? Call 554-8560 or e-mail to: the-southwester@yahoo.com. ■

## Letter from the Editor

This is the last time that I will be writing to you all as your editor. After being in this job for eight years, the time has come for new direction. I will be travelling quite a bit and will not be able to continue my editorial-managerial duties. I've really learned a lot and met some great people. Thank you. The group which puts together the *Southwester* each month will continue as usual and, jointly, will take on the extra duties of manager. If anyone out there has time to join the team, this is one volunteer job which not only promises to be very interesting but has the added benefit of your learning a lot about your community. Please call (202) 554-8560 and leave a message. Someone will return your call. Articles may be e-mailed to: thesouthwester@yahoo.com or you can drop labeled disks off at the desk of 700-7th St, SW, Apt 130.

—Carole Early

For advertising information, call John Hartwell at (202) 479-0783. He will be out-of-town between Oct. 15 and Nov. 15.

### Arena cont'd from page 1

commitment from the police, Jack Evans, the DC government, SWNA and ANC, the waterfront businesses and last, but not least, the community. At a previous meeting, Mr. Stephen Richard, Executive Director, stated, "Arena is eager to build partnerships with the mall and waterfront businesses. We need their support and we need an increase in theatre attendance; right now, it is low. Our main goal is for our new director, Molly Smith, to make Arena the center of the country for development of new plays. Also, we would like to be able to provide our consumers with creature comforts of safety, ample parking and large lobbies that offer early arrivals space to browse and enough rehearsal space to accommodate all our actors."

## Southwest Community Calendar

(October - November 1999)

Sept. 23	Thursday	NARFE DC Chapter 2052, 12:30 pm, Southwest Branch Library
Sept. 27	Monday	Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, 7:30 pm at King Greenleaf Recreation Center, 201 N St., SW
Oct. 1	Friday	Jack Evans, Southwest Task Force, 9 am Arena Stage Conference Room, 6th and Maine Ave., SW
Oct. 2	Saturday	Huge Yard Sale, 10 - 2 pm, Westminster Church, 400 I St., SW
Oct. 2	Saturday	Southwest Family Day, noon to 6:00 pm, Lansburg Delaware and L Sts., SW
Oct. 2	Saturday	NARFE SW Chapter Rummage Sale, ALL DAY Eastern Market, 200 block of 7th St., SE
Oct. 2	Saturday	Komen Toastmasters Club 10:15 am Southwest Branch Library
Oct. 4	Monday	SWNA Board Meeting, 7:00 pm SWNA Office, Waterside Mall I St. side
Oct. 5	Tuesday	First District Citizen Advisory Meeting, 7:00 pm, DCPD, 415 4th St., Community Room
Oct. 13	Wednesday	Fil-Am Toastmasters Club, 6:45pm Southwest Branch Library
Oct. 13	Wednesday	Southwest Chamber Players Concert, 7:30 pm St. Augustine's Church, 6th & M St. SW
Oct. 16	Saturday	Komen Toastmasters Club, 10:15 am Southwest Branch Library
Oct. 18	Monday	Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2D, 7:00 pm Westminster Presbyterian Church, 4th and I St., SW
Oct. 20	Wednesday	AARP SW Waterfront Chapter #4751, 12 noon St. Matthews Lutheran Church 3rd & M St. SW
Oct. 27	Wednesday	Fil-Am Toastmasters Club, 6:45pm Southwest Branch Library
Oct. 28	Thursday	NARFE DC Chapter 2052, 12:30 pm Southwest Branch Library
Nov. 1	Monday	SWNA Board Meeting, 7:00 pm in SWNA office in Waterside Mall I Street side
Nov. 2	Tuesday	First District Citizen Advisory Meeting, 7:00 pm, DCPD, 415 4th St., Community Room

Please submit calendar items for the next issue by October 6th to C.W. Hargrave, 554-8284.

Moreover, we would like to see the waterfront offer restaurants with ambience and food choices that compete with downtown, and additional shops that offer gifts, books, art galleries and coffee houses."

Following a commitment to attend community meetings and work with the schools, Mr. Richard's last comment was, "Arena wants to work better with Southwest to achieve our goals." Our response is: Arena we are ready! ■



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The advertising chair can help you design an ad specifically for you.

Ad deadline: Wednesday, October 6

## The following are the guidelines for publication in The Southwester:

The paper serves as a community bulletin board as well as a vehicle for news stories. Occasional articles pertinent to the city will be printed. Opinion letters should be addressed to *Letters to The Editor*. Contributions written by community residents are welcome. Articles should be well written and answer the five newspaper questions: Who, What, Where, When and How. Ads will be accepted only from paying customers, but may be rejected if the contents are of questionable taste.

The editor makes the final decision as to what appears in the paper.

## The Southwester

P.O. Box 70131 ■ Washington, DC 20024

554-8560 (leave message on tape)

### Southwester Staff:

Dale MacIver Assistant Editor  
Gary Hill Townhouse Distributor  
Wally Babington Theater Critic  
John Hartwell Advertising Chair  
Susan Fischer Advertising

Cathy Wallace Business Manager  
Maurice Cook Writer  
Karen Finkel Desktop Publisher  
C.W. Hargrave Calendar  
Beryl Rice Southwester Board

Drop off your stories on diskette with photos by Wednesday, October 6, in the box behind the counter at the SW Library, 3rd & I or the desk at 700 7th St., SW, Box 13B.

E-mail text to: thesouthwester@yahoo.com

Printing by Silver Communications Corp.

**The objective of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, a.k.a. SWNA is:** to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Southwest; to open to every Southwest resident the wide cultural horizon of modern urban living; to help create rich and equal social, educational and economic opportunities for every boy and girl of the Southwest; to assist in providing the opportunity for gainful employment for every adult resident and to promote development of the aesthetic potential of the Southwest. These objectives shall be pursued without regard to the social, economic and racial barriers that have divided cities in the past.



Jack Evans *contd from page 1*

ing was Andrew Altman, the new director of the Office of Planning in the city government. Prior to the meeting, I drove around Southwest to acquaint him with the community. He's from Philadelphia and most recently worked on the waterfront renaissance in Oakland, California, and comes extremely highly qualified for the job. He was most impressed with the potential for the waterfront and for integrating activities of the waterfront, Arena Stage, and Waterside Mall.

Reports from the Task Force's three community-action subcommittees were most heartening. Richard Westbrook, head of the Public Works Subcommittee, told of leading a second walk-through with officials of the Departments of Public Works (including the new head of DPW) and Parks and Recreation. Herbert Holmes, a board member of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, also joined the group.

This walk focused on areas east of Delaware Avenue. "What struck us the hardest was Lansburg Park, behind Bowen School, which is rundown, filled with trash, and dangerous," Dick said. The Recreation Department promised to clean it up, and we'll be watching for results.

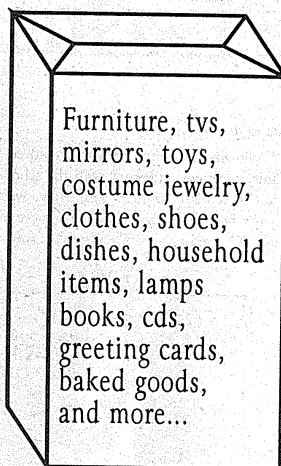
The vacant lot behind Syphax Gardens is strewn with trash. "We are bringing this problem to the attention of the D.C. Housing Authority," Dick said. "The Evans Task Force is doing a very good job of getting recognition for what's going on down here," Dick said later, but the real reason things are

getting done is people like Dick Westbrook. Andrew Kreider reported that his Retail Subcommittee wants safer pedestrian access from the Waterfront-SEU Metro Station directly to the Mall. It's met successfully with Colonial Parking, Metro, Bresler & Reiner, SWNA, and other local representatives. Also, the Subcommittee seeks better directions for people who emerge from the Metro Station and want to reach Arena Stage or the Waterfront. The near loss of Arena Stage made us all realize what an invaluable asset this is to the community. The Arts and Culture Subcommittee is continuing to work with Bill Wooby's Randall School/Millennium Art Center, Davie reported. He is moving closer to closure with the D.C. School Board for unfettered ownership of the facility. Currently, Wooby is establishing his "Art on the 6th Floor" business there. He has asked for community help to clean up the facility within the next three to four weeks. The Subcommittee will organize this event. Details regarding time and date to be announced.

The next Task Force meeting will be held on October 1 at 9:00 a.m. at Arena Stage. All Southwest residents are welcome, especially neighborhood leaders, resident council heads, chairs and boards of housing organizations, and representatives of businesses, churches, and other organizations. D.C. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton will join us for that meeting. Please come. ■

## Church Yard Sale Saturday, Oct 2 9 AM - 2PM

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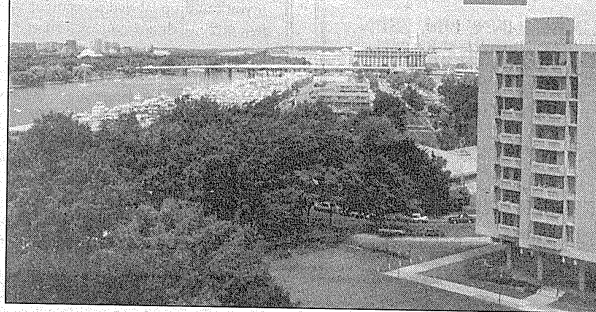
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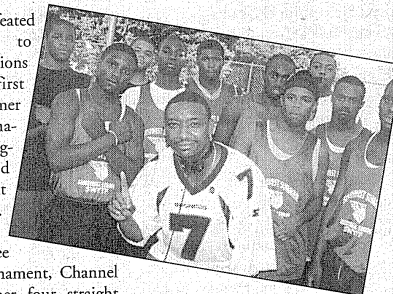
Two teams of Southwest basketball All-Stars defeated teams from Takoma Park, MD.

### S.W. Youth All-Stars Smother Takoma Park

Two S.W. All-Star teams - the 13 to 15 and 16 and up - outplayed teams from the City of Takoma Park, MD, this summer. Players selected from the 11 teams of the S.W. summer league which had been competing since June were pitted against similar all-stars from the City of Takoma Park recreation department. The younger S.W. team had little difficulty winning, after building a 22 point lead by half time. A much closer finish and late dunks by Calvin Howard and Gregory Head helped the older team finish off Takoma Park by 7 points. ■

### Channel Square Wins First Youth BB Championship

Channel Square defeated James Creek-1 to become the champions at Southwest's first annual youth summer basketball tournament, played at King-Greenleaf "Grand Garden" courts at Canal St. & M St. S.W. After losing two of the first three



games in the tournament, Channel Square put together four straight wins and controlled the tempo of the championship game. With great 3-point shooting by Alan Clipper, Keith Thompson and James "Deon" Martin, CS proved to be too tough late in the game. With 16 seconds remaining Alan Clipper hit a driving lay-up under the outstretched arms of Calvin Cade. CS coach Derrick Jackson was named coach-of-the-tournament. Tracey Hooks was given a trophy as "Fan of the Year." The Youth Activities Task Force of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) supplied over 100 basketball jerseys for the summer league. ■

#### Channel Squares Champions:

(back row, L to R) Maurice Bowling, Jason Cade, Colby Mercey, James "Deon" Martin, Joe Patterson, Gerald Bailey, Marcus Russell.

(front row L to R) Keith Thompson, Head coach Derrick Jackson, John Thompson, Alan Clipper.

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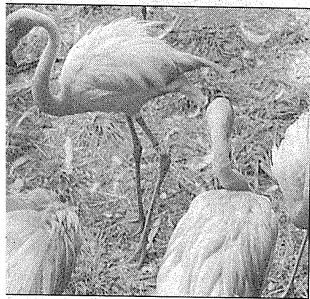
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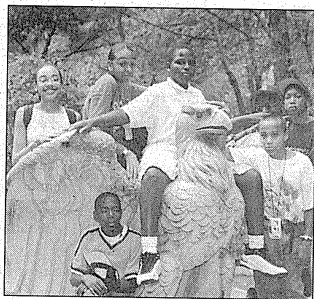


## Summer Program at Jefferson Jr. High School



Flamingoes in the zoo.

Classes on Mon. to Wed., YMCA on Thursday and field trips on Friday. That was the schedule for the S.E.A.S. summer program at Jefferson Jr. High School. The Black Wax Museum with a slave ship, the Baltimore Harbor, and the National Geographic Society



Jr. High students in the "Summer Education, Arts & Sports" program on a field trip.

were examples of field trips. The computer lab at Jefferson, with virtual reality, was the scene for some of the classwork. Art, music and technology were the emphasis for the classes. ■

## Club #4 Football Season Underway



Three teams of teen-age and pre-teen football players living in Southwest are competing with their neighborhoods in D.C. in the Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Club league. Most of the older youth have played in the league since age 8. Intense rivalry with other neighborhoods has developed. ■

## Tutors Needed at Bowen

You are needed to volunteer to work one-on-one with a third grade student at one of D.C.'s targeted assistance schools in Southwest. The Center for Artistry in Teaching has a program called Reading Works! It is an innovative and effective tutoring program. Some help a child improve his or her reading, writing, and communication skills while building a meaningful, positive relationship. Tutor once a week (Tues, Thurs, or Fri.) from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. at Bowen Elementary School, 101 M St., S.W. No experience is necessary. We welcome people of all ages and professions. We provide useful training. For more information call Elly at (202) 822-81. ■

## New Students, New Teachers At Amidon

Many new students in all grades have joined Amidon Elementary School and 16 new staff members were added this year. A "Newcomers Club" was organized and will meet regularly. Principal Mrs. B. Nophlin and School Counselor Ms. P. Reinbold greeted them and their parents with cookies and punch on Sep. 3. Other activities planned for the new year at Amidon include performances by students in the Performing Arts Program, monthly birthday celebrations and student government elections in October for grades 4-6. ■

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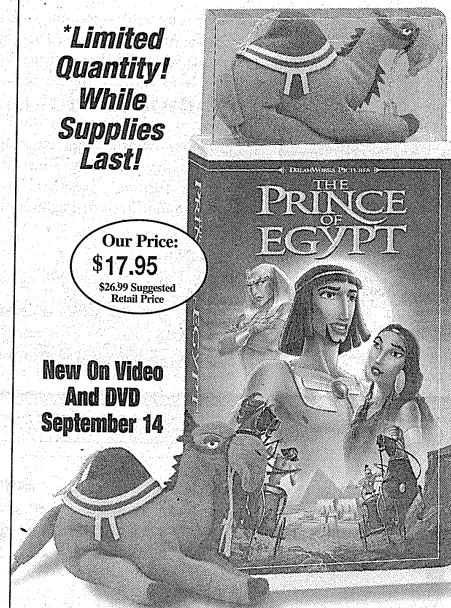
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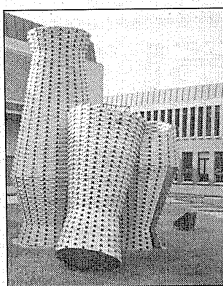
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## Arena- The Community

by Wallace Babington

Molly Smith, artistic director, expressed a desire all of us have for the Arena: "My fervent wish is that with this decision we will focus on bringing Arena in all her glory into the new millennium with a spectacular, bold renovation." Other comments give encouragement to the hope that the decision to remain in place will be accompanied by a determination to become an active participant and advocate for the rebuilding of our Southwest neighborhood into the exciting, vital community that we all want. For example, Stephen Richards, Arena's executive director, acknowledges that Arena has been in the Southwest neighborhood for 40 years "Öbut not of it, and we intend to change that posture, because we are now committed to revitalize not just our facility, but to revitalize the waterfront—the immediate Southwest." The president of Arena's board of trustees, Steven Bralove says: "We want to be a catalyst in Southwest." ■



## Sculpture on the Arena Stage lawn

by Wallace Babington

You have by now noticed the sculptures that grace the Arena Stage lawn. These are part of a project known as "Portals," the objective of which is to enhance the attractiveness and beauty of public spaces in DC. The project is supported with funds from the DC Commission on the Arts. The three sculptures are titled: "Three in a Complement" by Foon Sham; "Turning Together" by Brent Crothers; and "Arch in Flight II" by Emilie Brezezinski.

**Arena's first production** of the new season, "Hot 'N' Throbbing," is now on stage. This new play is written by Paula Vogel, author of "How I Learned to Drive", and is directed by Molly Smith. ■

## Cavaliers Find Jazz in SW

by Carl Greenwood

Friday Night Jazz is right here in Southwest D.C. It happens every week from 6-9 pm at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 400 I Street, SW (4th & I) it is top notch. We are happy to support and meet the members of the Southwest community for great jazz, good food and relaxing fun for the entire family. Admission is \$5, children/youth get in free. For more information, call the church at (202) 484-7700 or call Carl R. Greenwood at (202) 829-7159. ■

## Southwest Chamber Players

by David Ehrlich

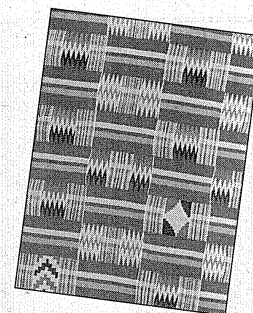
Wednesday, October 13: Joyce Bouvier, soprano; John Kaboff, Tom Blackburn, cello; David Ehrlich, Alfred Clark, piano. Poems by Kate Blackburn; Schumann, *Frauenliebe und Leben*; Bach, *First Cello Suite*; Bruch, *Kol Nidre*; Tchaikovsky, *Rococo Variations*.

Wednesday, November 3: THE RETURN OF CONTRASTS! The brilliant European ensemble whose 1997 appearance at Saint Augustine's was the first of our Southwest concerts. Kati Sebestyén, violin; Erwin Schiffer, viola; Freddy Arteel, clarinet; Dana Protopescu, piano. Leclair, *Trio Sonata*; Mozart, *Adagio/Rondo*; Beethoven quartet, op. 16; Bruch, *Romanian Melody*; Gystelinck, *Japanese Theme*; Prokofiev, *Overture on Hebrew Themes*.

All programs begin at 7:30 p.m. For further information, David Ehrlich, 202/484-6354. ■

## Millennium Arts Center Update


The Millennium Arts Center in the Randall School Building is a reality. They have moved into the building, "Art on the 6th Floor," formerly in the Design Center, will be housed in the newly purchased building at 65 I St., SW. Bill Wooby, the director, has been busily working on the Randall project for many years; it has taken much longer than he expected. The MAC will be a nonprofit place for performances, rehearsals, art studios, a cinema, a restaurant, and a Gallery. ■



Kente cloth in an exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art at Independence Ave. and 10th St. S.W. *Geometry Tradition of Africa Shown In Kente Cloth Exhibit*


Geometric motifs in kente cloth as shown in a current display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art represent part of the ancient legacy of geometric forms in Africa, which reached a zenith in the pyramid structures in Egypt. One group at D.C. Link and Learn in the Waterside Mall is using the exhibition to integrate cultural and historical resources into learning opportunities outside of the classroom. An after school and weekend studies program called "Time and Space" is offered by the S.M.A.R.T. Technology Learning Center (TLC) in the Mall. Their phone is (202) 484-7493 or RPA at (202) 488-1304. This Smithsonian's touring exhibition, called "Wrapped in Pride - Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity" will continue until January 2, 2000. ■

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**Coordinated by "Earl Banks Lettumplay"**

<p><i>September 10</i> Percy Smith, <i>drums</i>  Arnold Sterling, <i>alto sax</i>  Claude Liggins, <i>organ</i>  Rudy Turner, <i>guitar</i>  Gary Hart, <i>alto sax</i>  Mary B. Morrison, <i>poet</i></p> <p><i>September 17</i> Jerry Gordon, <i>guitar</i>  Emory Diggs, <i>bass</i>  Dan Reynolds, <i>piano</i>  Alfonse Young, Jr., <i>drums</i>  Stephanie Luster, <i>voicis</i></p> <p><i>September 24</i> Marshall Keys, <i>alto sax</i>  Cheyney Thomas, <i>bass</i>  Warren Shadd, <i>drums</i>  Larry Scott, <i>piano</i>  Mary Jefferson, <i>vocals</i></p> <p><i>October 1</i> Antonio Parker, <i>alto sax</i>  Michael Thomas, <i>trumpet</i>  Nasar Abadey, <i>drums</i>  James West, <i>bass</i>  Wade Beach, <i>piano</i></p>	<p><i>October 8</i> Jacques Johnson, <i>tenor sax</i>  Bill Clark, <i>piano</i>  Steve Novosel, <i>bass</i>  Gary Jenkins, <i>drums</i></p> <p><i>October 15</i> Greg Lamont, <i>organ</i>  Ricky Loza, <i>drums</i>  Spencer Ranch, <i>sax</i>  Julie Hall, <i>vocals</i>  Vince Evans, <i>piano</i>  Jay Jefferson, <i>drums</i>  Russell Sledge, <i>bass</i>  Marsha M. Meekins, <i>flute</i></p> <p><i>October 22</i> Alvin Campbell, <i>piano</i>  Kevin Lunsford, <i>guitar</i>  Teresa Wilson, <i>bass</i>  Ernie Williams, <i>drums</i>  Peter Edelman, <i>piano</i>  Butch Warren, <i>bass</i>  Billy Smith, <i>tenor sax</i>  Joe Jackson, <i>drums</i></p> <p><i>October 29</i></p> <p><i>November 5</i></p>
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Since 1901, the Southwest Community House has been an important part of the Southwest community. Currently we provide counseling and job referral to the unemployed, food to the hungry and clothing to the needy, food and information to our seniors, and an after-school tutoring program which keeps neighborhood children off the streets and focused on their schooling. This year we added a housing assistance program which prevents families from being put out on the streets, and an adult literacy program which will help parents read and find work.

When you give to the United Way/Combined Federal Campaign, support your friends who are making a difference where you live and/or where you work: in Southwest D.C.

Please pledge to Donor # 8191.

**Thank You for Supporting the**  
**SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY HOUSE!!!**

## REPORT FROM THE WARD 2 MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, WESTY BYRD

Dear Residents of Ward 2,

I have two goals as your member on the Board of Education: to be an effective advocate for the children I serve, and to restore honesty and integrity to the DC Public School System. It is the hardest job I have ever undertaken.

I submit the following report:

**Parents and Grandparents:** Many parents and grandparents have come to me with problems regarding their children and grandchildren. One was a mother from Walker Jones, whose two children were scheduled to repeat the same grade for the third year in a row. Another was the grandmother from Amidon, whose granddaughter was turned away on the first day of school because her paperwork was not correct. I am happy to report that, with the help of Mrs. Ackerman, we have been able to address the needs of these children and many others.

**What progress have our children made?** Earlier this year, I translated the percentage of students scoring below grade level in reading and math into an actual number of students, from the 71,000 students in the public school system.

**Reading:** 45,026 were tested in 1998. Approximately 30,831 scored below grade level. Math: 46,530 were tested in 1998. Approximately 35,704 scored below grade level. For 1999, Mrs. Ackerman set 6 performance targets for schools to raise student achievement. Of 147 schools, 7 schools met the targets. (Congratulations to Seaton Elementary, a Ward 2 school, for meeting the targets. Three of our Ward 2 schools—Hardy, Ross and School Without Walls—met 4 of the 6 targets.) I have not had the opportunity to break down the 1999 test results by student, but when I do, I will share them with you.

**Vocational Education:** Parents and students complained at a public meeting earlier this year that vocational education, education in trades such as brick laying, has been eliminated or dramatically cut back. The District receives \$3.9 million from the federal government for vocational education, provided the District spends \$10.3 million from its own accounts. When I looked into how the District dollars are spent, I found most of it goes to pay salaries, such as a math teacher, a business teacher, a clerk, a health/PE teacher, a librarian, a home economics teacher, a secretary, a principal. The federal government defines vocational education as "organized educational activities that offer a sequence of courses that provide individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers..." In fact, the District is not spending its money on a sequence of courses leading to a skill. I forwarded my research to Mrs. Ackerman. The vote to remove the President of the Board of Education: In June, I voted with the majority of the Board of Education to remove the President of the Board, Wilma Harvey, for: 1) taking official action to pay an employee a salary substantially higher than that voted on by the Board, 2) misrepresenting the Board in official correspondence—such as asking for a car and driver on behalf of the Board without the Board's knowledge, 3) using staff to perform personal errands and personal business, and 4) not showing up to testify before Representative Tom Davis on the school budget and not giving prepared testimony before the Mayor on the budget. The majority of the Board believed it was unfortunate but necessary to make this leadership change. Students, parents and the general public are demanding reform and

accountability. But lawyers for the Mayor, Corporation Counsel, said we must first hold a formal trial before removing the president.

**The Playground at Garrison Elementary, 12th and S Sts.:** The children at Garrison have a new playground. We owe a great deal of thanks to Mr. David Hudgens, who donated more than \$350,000; Arnold and Porter, which donated the legal representation; and Ruppert Nurseries, which donated the trees and shrubs. The public school system has been leasing the ball field next to the playground to a neighboring church as a parking lot for \$5,000 per year. The cars destroy the ball field by creating ruts and crevices. Mr. Hudgens has been kind enough to offer to completely renovate the field, but he will not do the work if the school system is going to lease the field to the church. At this point, it is up to Mrs. Ackerman—will the field be a field for soccer and baseball or a parking lot?

**The parking lot across from the Georgetown Safeway** has been leased as a flea market for many years. The operator of the market leased the parking lot for \$35,000 per year from the school system. In turn, the operator subleased 180 spaces to vendors each week for somewhere between \$25 and \$40 per week. Years ago, vendors would start lining up early Sunday morning to be assured a space at the flea market. One antique dealer alleges that the operator charges a \$1,500 annual fee to hold a space each week. If this is accurate, the flea market could be generating \$400,000 in income annually. Several months ago the Control Board issued a directive that all school property must be leased at market value. In fact, the public school system does not know what the market value of this property is because the administration has never put it out for competitive bid, and there are several dealers who would like the opportunity to bid on the property. Nobody knows how much money is being made from this property because it is an all cash-business. I have twice asked Mrs. Ackerman to make sure any future lease of the property provides the children of the District their fair share.

**Teachers:** One teacher called me and said, "If Mrs. Ackerman were in the room, I would hug her. For the first time, my books arrived on time, there are adequate supplies to teach, and there is copy paper in the copy machine."

**Shelby Braxton-Brooks,** valedictorian of Duke Ellington, is attending Harvard University this year...Elizabeth Primas, a reading instructor at Anthony Bowen, received the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award from The Washington Post....Delante Venson, a 4th grader at Stevens Elementary, won an essay contest for her essay on honesty. She wrote, "...I was about to lie, but...I told the truth. She punished me for a week...I learned to appreciate what I have...I learned not to steal what you want but to earn what you want..." Colin Hughes, an 8th grader at Hardy Middle School, won his division. He wrote, "Why is it so hard to tell the truth? Maybe you are afraid of the consequences and think you can get out of trouble by lying. Some people lie about themselves to make it appear as though they were superior, or enhance their egos..." The Ward 2 School fund paid for the 6th grade girls at Bowen Elementary to have a 10 week course in modern dance. The instructor from Dance Place said, "The girls knew the dance within 2 sessions. They are the best group of girls I have ever worked with." Also, the Ward 2 School fund helped send a class from Shaw Junior High to New York City. I am happy to report they had a wonderful time. I will continue to work hard for our children and for a public school system of which we can be proud. If you have questions or comments, please call me at 342-3916.

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Westy Byrd

## Crime Continues To Drop In Southwest

Theft from auto continues to be the most frequent crime in the Southwest area between the U.S. Capitol and the Potomac River. Somewhere in that area of 11,000 residents and tens of thousands of federal employees, nearly twice a day someone's car is broken into. In that 200 square block area a street mugging occurs 2 or 3 times a month. Overall, crime in that SW area has dropped 9% since 1998. ■

### L'Enfant Plaza *contd from page 1*

In any case, according to the senior vice president of Sarakreek Holding N.V., a Holland-based company which purchased L'Enfant Plaza in 1997, "The new skylight and plaza will add prominence to La Promenade as a shopping destination and take L'Enfant Plaza into the new century with appropriate dignity and style." The skylight should be complete in time for Christmas shopping and holiday dining in the more than 50 shops and restaurants of La Promenade. Meanwhile, of course, all the shops are open and unaffected by the construction going on above them. ■

We want to thank everyone for their articles. Due to the fact that we had three times as many articles as we had space, many articles which we received will be in at a later date. ■

## Southwest Family Day

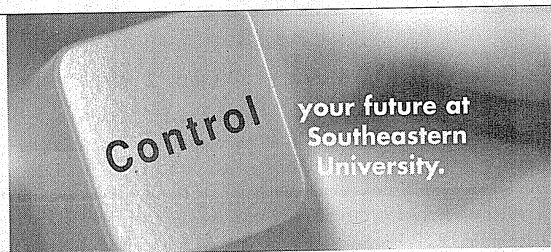
Southwest Community House will again sponsor its annual Southwest Family Day, "a celebration of the Southwest community," states Peter Jones, the agency's Executive Director. "There'll be something for everyone: lots of free food, rides and activities for children, free health screenings by the Southwest Community Health Center, live performances, traditional fun contests, and more. There's going to be bingo and a chess tournament. We're anticipating involvement from the D.C. Police and Fire Departments, the U.S. Army and the Coast Guard.

The 1999 Southwest Family Day will be held on Saturday, October 2, 1999 at Lansburg Park. Contact Ms. Roberta Patrick at 488-7210. ■

## Adult Literacy Grant

The Southwest Community House was recently awarded an adult literacy grant reports Peter Jones, the agency's Executive Director. "The Board of Directors, staff and I are ecstatic that Southwest House can now provide this service. This is a golden opportunity to not only help adults to read, write and comprehend English better, but, perhaps for the first time in their lives, some Southwest parents will soon be assisting their children with their homework."

For enrollment information, contact SWCH at 488-7210. ■



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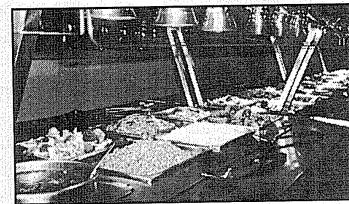
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